



California Regional Water Quality Control Board Central Coast Region



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Arnold Schwarzenegger
Governor

January 29, 2007

Dear Interested Party:

Notice of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Scoping Meeting and Public Workshop on the Development of a Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for the Santa Maria River, Oso Flaco Lake, Oso Flaco Creek, Little Oso Flaco Creek, Main Street Canal, Bradley Channel, Bradley Canyon Creek, and Orcutt-Solomon Creek to Control the Discharge of Nitrate; and Oso Flaco Creek, the Santa Maria River, Main Street Canal, Blosser Channel, Bradley Canyon Creek, and Orcutt-Solomon Creek to Control the Discharge of Unionized Ammonia

PURPOSE

Central Coast Water Board staff will hold a CEQA scoping meeting and public workshop to discuss development of TMDLs and Implementation Plans for the control of discharges of nitrates and unionized ammonia to the waters mentioned above (Project). Staff previously held a meeting in December, 2006 and did not address this Project at that time. As such, Water Board staff is hosting another meeting. The Project will allocate pollutant loading capacities (the TMDLs) and establish an implementation plan to control discharges so that the receiving waters attain water quality standards. The applicable quality standards for these TMDLs are as follows:

- A maximum concentration of 10 mg/L for nitrate (as N).
- A maximum concentration of 0.025 mg/L for unionized ammonia (NH₃).

The Projects include proposals to add TMDLs and associated implementation plans to control discharges. Staff will propose the Projects for Water Board adoption at a public meeting in 2008.

BACKGROUND

- These waters were listed or are proposed to be listed as impaired by nitrate and/or unionized ammonia on the State's "List of Water Quality Limited Segments" pursuant to Clean Water Act Section 303(d). The Clean Water Act requires the State to develop TMDLs for waters on the list. State law requires development of implementation plans to achieve the TMDLs. Staff has conducted investigations on the nature and causes of impairments, the legal standards that must be met in these waters, and strategies to reduce the amount of nitrate and/or unionized ammonia discharged to these waters in order to achieve the associated water quality standards. Staff plans to propose TMDLs

and implementation plans to the Water Board for adoption in 2008. The TMDLs or implementation plans may require the installation of pollution control equipment or establish a performance standard or treatment requirement.

CEQA SCOPING MEETING AND PUBLIC WORKSHOP CONDUCT AND SCHEDULE

This meeting and workshop will provide participants with: 1) an explanation and understanding of the TMDL projects under development, 2) an opportunity to comment on the Project, and 3) an opportunity to comment on the appropriate scope and content of the environmental analysis and environmental documentation for these projects to be prepared pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq.) and the Water Board's certified regulatory program for basin planning (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15251, subdivision (g); and Title 23, Section 3775 et seq).

Interested persons are specifically requested to provide information about:

- How they or responsible parties would foreseeably comply with the TMDL;
- The reasonably foreseeable significant environmental impacts associated with those means of compliance;
- Specific evidence supporting that such impacts are reasonably foreseeable, and describing the magnitude (how significant) of the impacts;
- Reasonable alternative means of compliance that would have less significant adverse environmental impacts;
- Reasonable mitigation measures that would minimize any unavoidable significant adverse environmental impacts associated with the means of compliance.

In response to requests by stakeholders at a previous CEQA meeting in December 2006, Water Board staff identified examples of foreseeable methods of compliance to reduce nitrates and/or unionized ammonia discharges or in-stream concentrations. These are as follows:

- Irrigation and nutrient management
- Fertilizer storage
- Septic system maintenance
- Manure management
- Grazing management
- Public education and outreach

Water Board Staff will consider issues raised and comments provided, both on the appropriate scope and content of the environmental documentation and on the Projects, in the final reports that will be presented to the Water Board.

Water Board Staff will accept verbal comments at the Public Workshop and written comments received by March 26, 2007. Water Board Staff will not prepare written

responses to each individual comment received, but will incorporate written responses to all significant environmental points in the final reports that will be provided to the Water Board. Water Board Staff will prepare written responses to individual comments submitted during the formal public comment period that will be conducted prior to hearing by the Water Board planned for 2008.

Time and Location:

Date: Monday, February 26, 2007

Time: 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM

Address: Central Coast Water Board, 895 Aerovista Place, Suite 101, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401-7906. The facilities will be accessible to persons with disabilities. Individuals requiring special accommodations are requested to contact Katie McNeill at least 5 working days prior to the meeting. TTY users may contact the California Relay Service at 1-800-735-2929 or voice line at 1-800-735-2922.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Questions regarding CEQA Scoping or the Projects should be directed to Katie McNeill (805) 549-3336 or kmcneill@waterboards.ca.gov. Please mail written comments to Katie McNeill at 895 Aerovista Place, Suite 101, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401-7906.

A Preliminary Project Report and Project Summary for nitrate and unionized ammonia is available at the Water Board website at:

<http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/rwqcb3/TMDL/PublicCommentParticipation.htm>. The reports are also available by request at the office of the Central Coast Water Board; please contact: Kelley Blackshear at 805-549-3865.

Sincerely,

Roger W. Briggs
Executive Officer

cc: Interested Parties list for Santa Maria and Oso Flaco TMDL projects

File: Santa Maria and Oso Flaco Nitrate and Unionized Ammonia TMDL

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